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# *ID in progress*

**Research through design**



# Visual Interaction Platform

**Andrés Lucero, PDEng**

PhD student of  
User Centered Engineering

‘In my PhD research I examine how to support the work of Industrial Designers with technological tools in a sensible way. I really like to work closely with users so I have been studying design practice as a whole’, says Andrés Lucero.



## From Santiago to Eindhoven

‘Coming from Santiago to Eindhoven, I had to make a transition from traditional non-technological design education taught by designers, to competency-based education focused on intelligent products coached by staff members representing a rich mix of disciplines. It was also a change from a warm, open, and hectic culture, to a somewhat colder, closed and structured culture. In Santiago, I had an 8 am to 8 pm schedule working as a designer and a teacher, and a mobile that rang every fifteen minutes. So when I came to Holland six years ago I got rid of my mobile and I still do not miss it. I also sold my car and now I love riding my bicycle. Dutch life suits us better, especially now that we have a two-year-old daughter’, says Andrés Lucero. But true integration is still a long way off. It can take years before a Dutch person invites you to his home.’

## Working at the VIP lab

Andrés: ‘I do research related to the Visual Interaction Platform (VIP), a technically advanced lab focused on the creation of new tools that rely on computer vision for tangible interaction. My background in Visual Communication and Interaction Design was quite different from that of Professor Jean-Bernard Martens and Assistant Professor Dima Aliakseyeu, who both have a technology background. I disagree with them sometimes, but the discussions we have are good, fruitful and respectful and in the end our experiences are complementary. They both helped me achieve a more balanced process that is not exclusively based on user studies and design, but takes technological aspects into consideration as well.’

## A holistic research approach

‘From my research, I have discovered that designers are open to all kinds of technological aids but that they are only willing to accept them, when they truly complement their work. So in my research I have tried to start by obtaining a global idea of the work designers do, in the context of their design studios. I have involved users throughout my research process, doing iterative studies in which I constantly feed back to the users the analysis and synthesis of the results of previous steps. As such, I favor a holistic, ‘demand pull’ approach, instead of a ‘technology push’ approach’, says Andrés decisively. ‘I have complemented my Dutch studies with industrial designers by conducting further studies in Finland with textile and fashion designers from the University of Art and Design Helsinki (Uiah) on their use of mood boards’.

## Open door policy

‘I really love teaching here at ID but sometimes I need to restrict myself a bit more. I have an open door policy and I’m sometimes too willing to help students. I want to finish my thesis and be ready in the fall of 2008 and then see what the future – probably in Holland – brings.’